

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action dated December 2, 2004, please consider the following remarks.

In the Office Action issued December 2, 2004, claims 1, 3-4, 6-12, 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,222,653 to Asahi (Asahi). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Asahi in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,842,801 to Kamiguchi et al. (Kamiguchi). Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Asahi in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,310,992 to Gehrke et al. (Gehrke). The drawings were objected to as needing description labels.

Regarding the drawings, replacement drawing sheets have been submitted, which include description labels as required by the Examiner in Figs. 1-5.

Claims 1-4 and 6-16 are now pending in this application. Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 5 more particularly point out the subject matter that the inventor considers to be the invention. Claim 5 has been cancelled.

The present invention provides an interface device that is automatically configured depending on how different network units are connected to each other. Examples of different manners of connecting network units are given in connection with Figs. 4 and 5 in the present application. The present invention

thus provides an interface device that is automatically configured, for example, in the two different situations shown in Fig 4 and 5.

The applicant respectfully submits that the present invention, according to claims 1, 3-4, 6-12, 14-16, is not obvious in view of Asahi because even if Asahi were modified as suggested by the Examiner, the result would not be the present invention as claimed. The device disclosed by Asahi has a completely different purpose than the present invention. Asahi discloses an optical transmission device comprising a plurality of nodes connected to form a ring structure. In particular, Fig. 16 of Asahi illustrates nodes connected to form a ring with four transmission line optical fibers, where two lines comprise a bi-directional working operation system, and where the other two lines comprise a bi-directional stand-by operation system. Each node transmits a wavelength division multiplexed optical signal (see column 1, lines 51-61). In each node a division/multiplexing takes place. Each node includes a number of insertion division devices (967-1 to 967-n) for the different wavelengths. In Fig 16, it is shown that the device 967-1 includes a number of receivers Rx and a number of transmitters Tx. The device 967-1 includes a connector section 979, which functions to selectably connect inputs to outputs depending on the failure condition of the transmission lines in the ring network (see column 2, lines 55-65). The purpose of the prior art is thus different than the purpose of the present invention. The purpose of the prior art is to reconfigure the connection depending on a failure in the transmission in the ring

network and not to automatically configure the interface depending on how different network units are connected to each other via the interface.

By contrast, the present invention, for example, according to claim 1, requires a controller arranged to automatically control the switching unit in response to at least one control signal such that said first state is selected when said at least one control signal indicates either that no transceiver module is attached to said second receiving section or that no optical signal above a certain signal level is received by a transceiver module attached to said second receiving section. Thus, the present invention controls the switching unit based on whether a transceiver module is attached, while Asahi discloses switching based on the failure of condition of transmission lines. Asahi does not disclose or suggest this required element of the present invention.

Further, Asahi does not disclose or suggest any interface device having receiving sections designed to receive a first and a second transceiver module as defined in claim 1. The Examiner interprets Fig 16 such that the receiver section 971 and the transmitter section 978 together form a transceiver module. However, there is no disclosure or suggestion in this direction in Asahi. The sections 971 and 978 are separate sections. Asahi never suggests that these sections (or any other sections) together may form a transceiver module. The sections 971 and 978 are not even located next to each other. Analogously, the Examiner interprets the sections 974 and 975 in Fig 16 as together constituting a transceiver module.

However, this is not the case for analogous reasons to those stated above concerning the sections 971 and 978. Moreover, there is no indication whatsoever in the cited document that two such sections together should form a transceiver module which can be plugged into and unplugged from receiving sections in an interface device in a quick-connect manner.

By contrast, the present invention, for example, according to claim 1, requires the recited first transceiver module and the recited second transceiver module. Likewise, the present invention requires the first and second receiving sections to be designed such that the first and second transceiver modules may be plugged into the receiving sections and unplugged therefrom in a quick-connect manner.

From the above explanation, it follows that both the design and the purpose of the present invention is completely different from that of the cited document. And since the purpose of the prior art according to the cited document is different from that of the present invention, there would be no reason for a person skilled in the art to change the structure disclosed in the prior art such that an interface device according to the present invention is obtained.

Therefore, the present invention according to claim 1, and according to claims 3-4, 6-12, 14-16, which depend therefrom, is not obvious in view of Asahi.

The applicant respectfully submits that the present invention according to claim 5 is not obvious over Asahi in view of Gehrke. As amended, claim 1

incorporates the subject matter of cancelled claim 5, thus, the applicant respectfully submits that the present invention, according to claim 1, as amended, is not obvious over Asahi in view of Gehrke. Gehrke discloses a method and apparatus for interconnecting multiple modular devices in a communication system. In particular, Gehrke concerns an apparatus that constitutes a base station in a radio communication system (see for example column 1, lines 6-23 and column 3, lines 17-21). This particular apparatus has a chassis 101 with multiple slots that can accommodate the insertion of multiple base station modules (column 3, lines 21-24). One module is a radio frequency module 104. The different modules can communicate with the module 104 via an optical serial bus 108 (see column 3, lines 35-58). The different modules have transmitters 204, 304 and receivers 202, 302 in order to couple to the optical communication bus 108 (see for example column 3, line 60 to column 4, line 18). The apparatus according to the cited document thus has a single optical communication bus 108 for simplifying the interconnection of the different modules in a base station for a radio frequency communication system (see column 1, lines 46-54). The purpose and the design of the apparatus according to Gehrke is thus completely different from that of Asahi. A person skilled in the art would therefore have no reason to combine the teachings of these documents. In particular, the person skilled in the art would have no reason to arrange selected ones of the sections 971-978 in Asahi in a single module of the kind used in the base station according to Gehrke. In

particular, Asahi is not concerned with the communication of different modules along a single common optical communication bus. Instead Asahi, as discussed above, concerns an optical ring network with a redundant number of fibers in order to make it possible for the ring network to function even if there is an interruption on any of the fibers.

In addition, as discussed above, Asahi does not disclose or suggest the requirement of the present invention, according to claim 1, of first and second receiving sections that are designed such that the first and second transceiver modules may be plugged into the receiving sections and unplugged therefrom in a quick-connect manner. Gehrke likewise does not disclose or suggest this. Thus, the even if the combination of Asahi and Gehrke suggested by the Examiner were made, the combination of Asahi and Gehrke still would not disclose or suggest this required element of the present invention.

Therefore, the present invention, according to claim 1, which incorporates the subject matter of cancelled claim 5, is not obvious over Asahi in view of Gehrke.

The applicant respectfully submits that the present invention according to claim 2 is not obvious over Asahi in view of Kamiguchi. Kamiguchi discloses a switching control method that can smoothly affect transfer from a pressure holding step to a metering and kneading step in an injection-molding machine employing a servomotor as an injection shaft driving source for axially driving a screw.

Kamiguchi appears to bear no relation to the technical field of the present invention. In addition, as discussed above, Kamiguchi does not disclose or suggest the requirement of the present invention, according to claim 1, from which claim 2 depends, of first and second receiving sections that are designed such that the first and second transceiver modules may be plugged into the receiving sections and unplugged therefrom in a quick-connect manner. Thus, the even if the combination of Asahi and Kamiguchi suggested by the Examiner were made, the combination of Asahi and Kamiguchi still would not disclose or suggest this required element of the present invention.

Therefore, the present invention, according to claim 2, is not obvious over Asahi in view of Kamiguchi.

Each of the claims now pending in this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of this case and early issuance of the Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

Additional Fees:

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any insufficient fees or credit any overpayment associated with this application to Deposit Account No. 19-5127 (19378.0018).

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, all of the Examiner's rejections to the claims are believed to be overcome. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for all the claims remaining in the application. Should the Examiner feel further communication would facilitate prosecution, he is urged to call the undersigned at the phone number provided below.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Dated: February 3, 2005

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ANNOTATED DRAWING SHEETS
FOR FIGURES 1-5

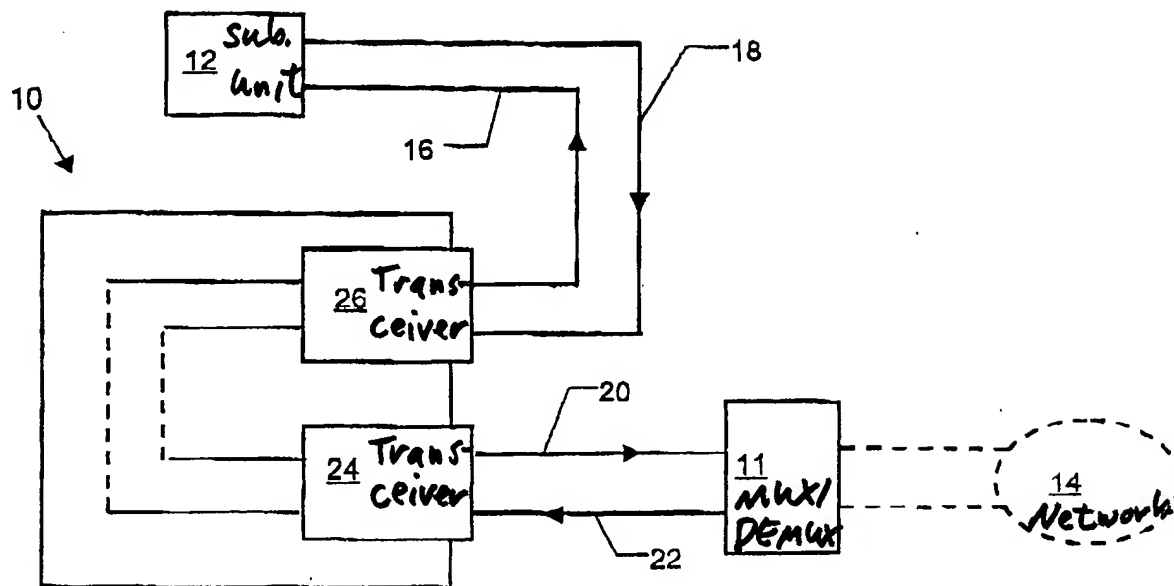


FIG 1 PRIOR ART

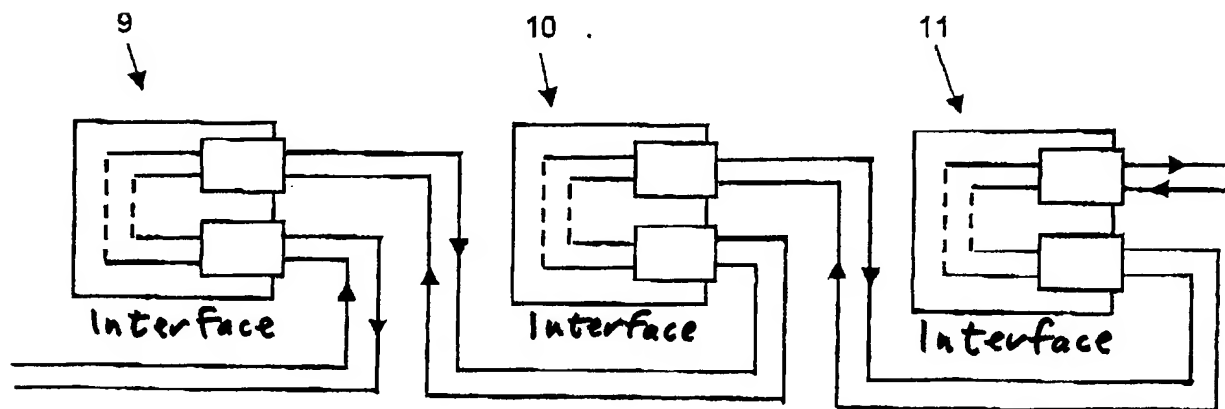


FIG 2 PRIOR ART

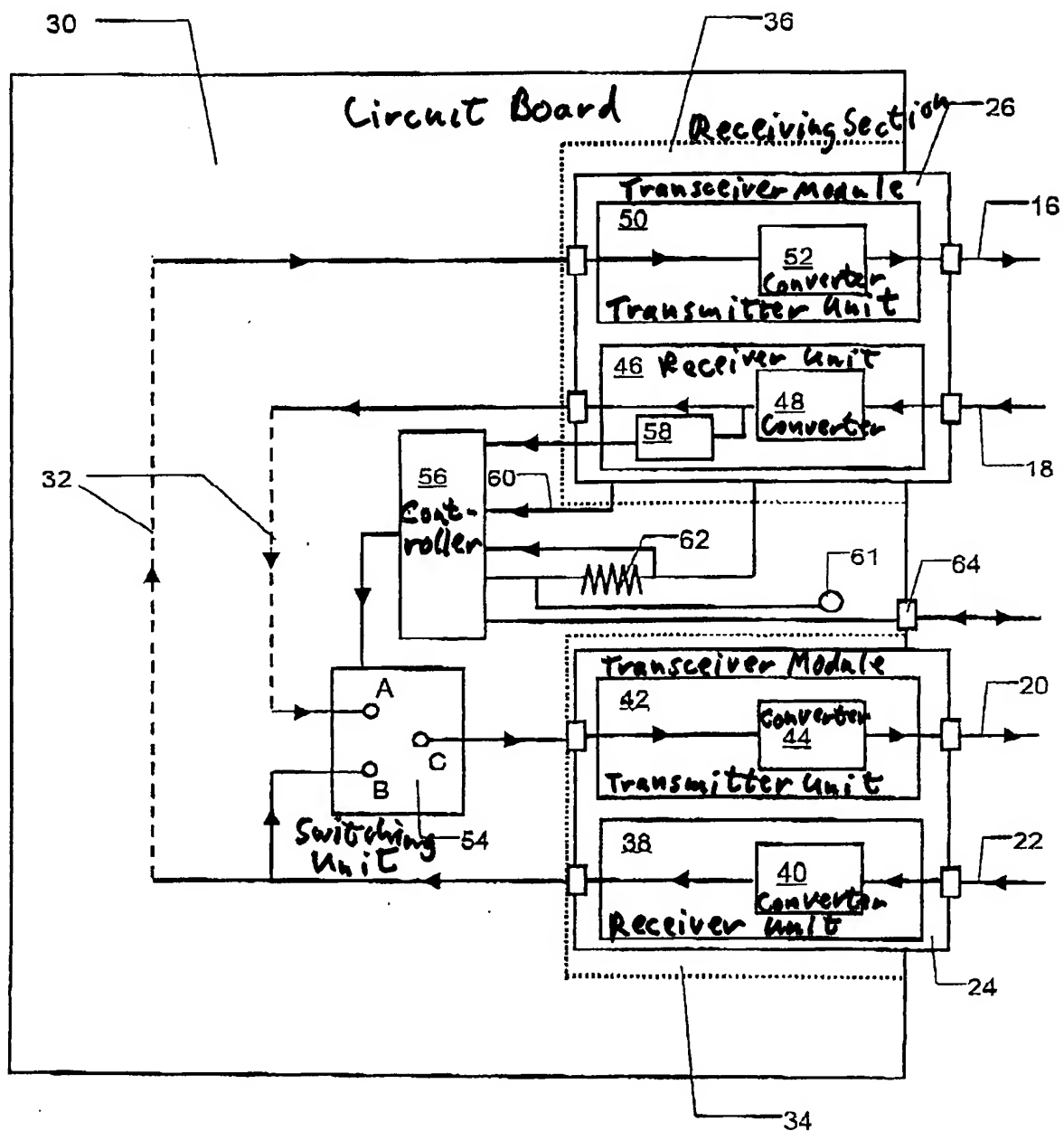


FIG 3



3/3

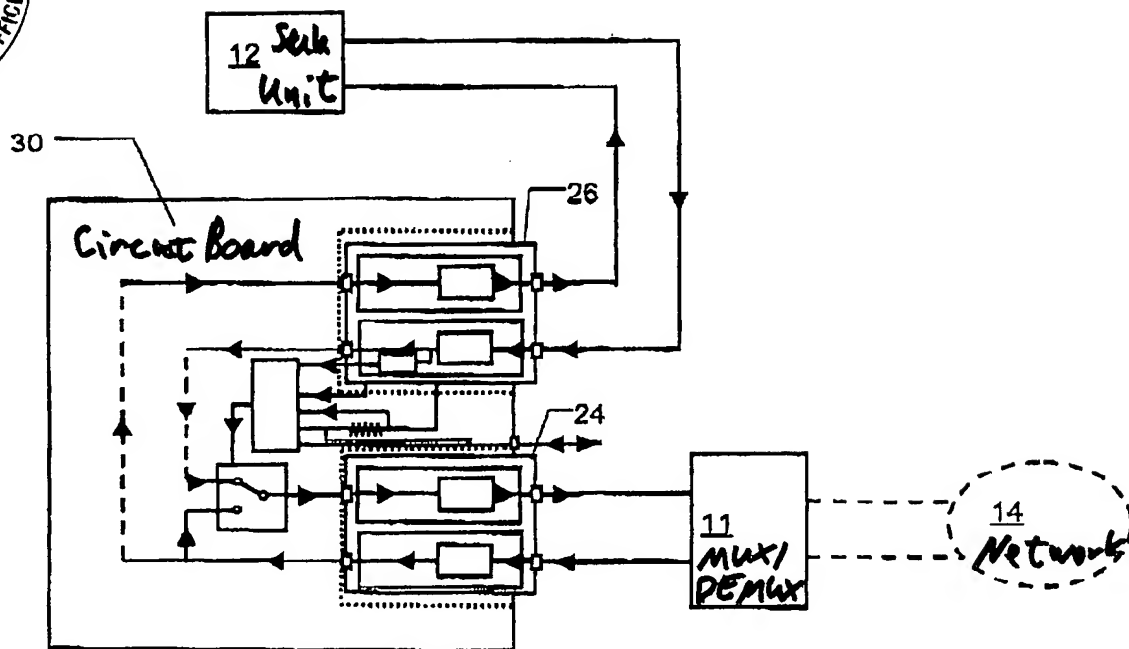


FIG 4

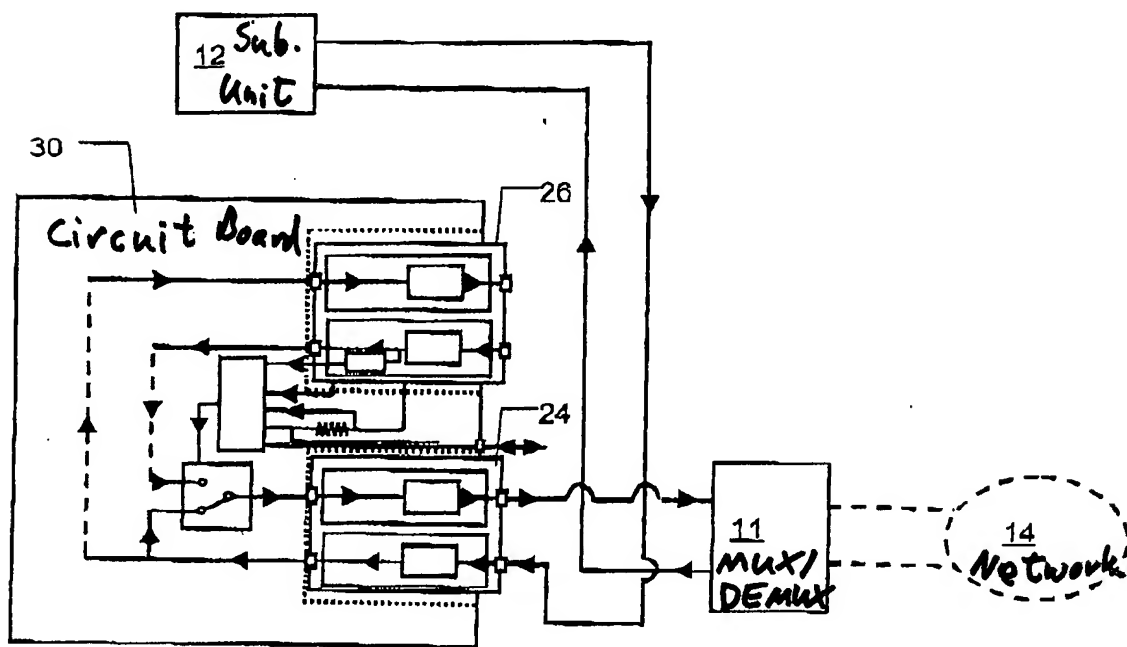
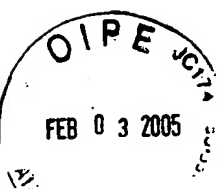


FIG 5



REPLACEMENT DRAWING SHEETS
FOR FIGURES 1-5

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 1-5. These sheets, which include Figs. 1-5, replace the original sheets including Figs. 1-5. Figs. 1-5 have been labeled with description labels.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

Annotated Sheets Showing Changes